

**Minutes of the SC Commission on Higher
Education Executive Committee Meeting
March 20, 2020**

In Attendance:

Executive Committee Members Present

Mr. R. Wes Hayes, Chair
Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Vice Chair
Mr. Paul Batson
Mr. Charles Dalton
Mr. Charles Munns

Other Commissioners Present

Ms. Terry Seckinger

CHE Staff Present

Dr. Rusty Monhollon, President & Executive
Director
Ms. Monica Goodwin, Chief Information Officer
Dr. John Lane, Director of Academic Affairs
Mr. Georges Tippens, Facilities Program Manager
Ms. Bunnie Ward, Director of Governmental
Affairs & Communications
Mr. Bryce Wilson, Director of Fiscal Affairs

Chair Hayes called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. It was confirmed that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

1. Approval of Minutes (February 24, 2020)

Wes Hayes

Chair Hayes called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee's meeting on February 24, 2020. Commissioner Munns requested a minor syntax change. Vice Chair Horne motioned to approve the minutes as amended by Commissioner Munns. Seconded by Commission Munns and carried unanimously, the minutes were approved.

2. Review of the April 2, 2020 CHE Draft Meeting Agenda

Wes Hayes

Dr. Monhollon recommended the April 2 Commission meeting be conducted via teleconference, and he proposed that the agenda only comprise the agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and reports from the president and executive director and chairman.

Commissioner Munns expressed concern that delaying approval of three academic program proposals may jeopardize students' educational degrees. Dr. Lane assured that, so long as action is taken by June, colleges should be able to achieve accreditation from The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) by the end of summer.

Dr. Monhollon announced that Coastal Carolina University agreed to postpone deliberation of their program proposal until a time less stressed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was decided that the April 2 Commission meeting agenda would be set as proposed earlier by Dr. Monhollon.

3. Other Business

Chair Hayes informed the Committee that he recently spoke with Governor McMaster, who asked the Commission to develop a unified response to address the financial crisis resulting from institutions' financial remittances to students. He relayed that the governor wants the state's higher education system to avoid inconsistent messaging on the matter. Dr. Monhollon stated that staff have begun planning the response and that institutions' presidents have been notified.

Dr. Monhollon continued, stating that presidents had been holding—and will continue to hold—bi-weekly calls to keep all current of developments and provide a channel for feedback pertaining to the agency's activities.

Chair Hayes noted a letter will be drafted and distributed to all institutions, to notify them that the Governor has tasked the Commission with the responsibility of developing guidance for institutions' remittances to students.

The Executive Committee, Commissioner Seckinger, and Dr. Monhollon then discussed issues pertaining to online learning, students who need additional academic assistance, degree conferral, and commencement exercises.

Dr. Monhollon stated that the agency is operating on a modified schedule, with limited staff in-office to respond to phone and email inquiries. He added that the agency will continue to monitor conditions, assist institutions as needed and plan for institutional support after the crisis subsides.

4. Adjourn

A **motion** was made and **seconded** for the Executive Committee to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 a.m.